

Appln No. 09/575,197
Amdt. Dated August 26, 2004
Response to Office action of June 22, 2004

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The objections and submissions made by the Examiner in the Office Action have been carefully considered and it is submitted that distinguishing features are present in the invention and now are brought out in the amended claims.

Specification

The Examiner has maintained her objection to the disclosure on the basis that it should include the status of the pending applications as well as their filing dates. In response, the disclosure has been amended to include the missing details of the co-pending applications.

Claims – Obviousness

1. Claim 1 is objected to on the basis that it includes an expression that lacks clarity. In response, the phrase “the sensing device” has been removed from the expression “the sensing device the indicating data”.

2. The Examiner objects to claims 1 to 18 and claims 20 to 53 on the basis of them being obvious to a skilled addressee in light of the disclosure in Perazza (US 5,329,959), when considered in combination with Mallicoat (US 5,248,856), Beatson et al. (US 5,892,824), Xerox (WO99/50787), Story (US 5,673,430) and Japanese Patent Abstract 10194562 A, respectively.

In response, the Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 4, 5, 29, 32, 33, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52 and 53 to emphasize the fact that the coded data, according to the invention, is indicative of its own location on the bill form. This is an essential feature of the invention, which allows information of the position of the sensing device relative to the form to be obtained by the sensing device and transmitted to the computer system. The Applicant draws to the Examiner's attention the fact that Perazza does not teach or suggest any coded data that is indicative of reference points on/of the form, nor is there any motivation to modify the system to include such parameters/issues. The bar codes 22, for example, only “act as registers, to orient the CPI when placed in the optical scanning unit...” (col.11, lines 19-21). The Bill Payer's account number information, on the other hand, “when transmitted to the ...computer, allows the records ...to be retrieved... that ...may include the position of the Biller on the CPI...” (col. 16, lines 36-43).

Whilst the Applicant disagrees with the Examiner that this text is a disclosure of data indicative of a plurality of reference points, it is submitted that the amendment further underlines the difference since it makes it abundantly clear that the reference points are associated with the location of the coded data itself and not that of other data elements. Whilst some limited positional information is mentioned in Perazza, it is not related to the location of the coded data itself. Therefore, a person skilled in the art could not derive the present invention from the citation as a matter of straight forward routine. Accordingly, it is submitted that cited independent claims clearly possess the requisite inventive step to qualify for patentability. It is further submitted that the dependent claims in this application are also patentable, by virtue of their dependence on the corresponding independent claims.

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The Applicant also points out that "the coded data being indicative of its own position" is a part of the original disclosure (see for example the statement "The tag also identifies its own position on the page" on page 14, line 21). Thus, whilst clarifying the claim language, the introduced amendment does not add new matter. Furthermore, it is submitted that the issue of the coded data being indicative of its own location was inherent in the language of the original claim. The present amendment merely clarifies and emphasizes this point and, therefore, raises no new issues for consideration.

In light of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that all of the Examiner's objections have been successfully traversed. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the application is courteously solicited.

Very respectfully,

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